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by Francis E. McMahon

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THE
Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-THIRD YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

THE SUPREME COURT DECISIONS

THE RECENT DECISIONS of the Supreme Court of the United States have reaffirmed both the strength and the glory of democracy. They were made at a time when many had become prophets of doom, discouraged at the gradual inroads being made on civil liberties and disappointed in the easy relinquishment of personal rights.

Democracy is not easy. As the highest form of political life man has devised, it may properly be regarded as one of the peaks of his achievements. But it is an achievement which needs constantly to be renewed. It is not a prize which, once attained, is forever secure. Nor is it automatic or self-sustaining. Depending as it does on an alert, interested, informed electorate, it is in constant jeopardy from apathy, ignorance, fear and hostility.

Since the end of World War II, democracy in America has been severely tested. It has been threatened from within and from without. The very real danger of Communism has aroused most Americans to democratic values and the need to defend them. But one of the most corrosive aspects of Communism is the way in which it has divided people who hold similar fundamental beliefs, who are equally devoted to their country and are deeply opposed to Communism. Through a desire to protect and preserve the "American way of life" many have urged that the State exercise vast authority to secure an absolute security. Such citizens have been willing to grant wide and vaguely defined powers to various agencies of the government. For over a decade now, these powers have been steadily employed by the Executive and Legislative branches of our government.

While natural sentiment against Communism has lent general popular support to the actions of a number of Congressional Committees, they have not been free from criticism. For many have pointed out that the emphasis on national security was promoting a general indifference to the rights of the individual, to the liberties guaranteed by the Bill of Rights. They recalled the statement of the late Justice H. Jackson: "It seems to me those traditional freedoms are less in danger of any sudden overthrow than of being gradually bartered or traded for something else on which the people place a higher current value. In this anxiety-ridden time, many are ready to exchange some of their liberties for a real or fancied increase in security against external foes, internal betrayers or criminals."

THE CONTROVERSIES which swept across this country, which were often conducted in a most acrid demagogic style and in regrettably personal terms, obscured but did not hide the basic issues. These involved classic questions which are forever to be debated and never finally settled. The controversies drew into the arena of immediate significance the inevitable tensions between the State and the individual, between the needs of security and the demands of freedom, between authority and liberty. Amid the confusion and harsh controversy, the Congressional committees gradually extended their power until their hearings seemed a natural part of our political life.

Now, with authority and responsibility, the Supreme Court of the land has affirmed the rights of the individual, the importance of civil liberties.

The Jencks decision rules that when the government offers the testimony of a witness as evidence it must produce the documents which pertain to the testimony—even if such documents are in "secret" F.B.I. files. The Watkins ruling states that Con-

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gressional authority is broad but limited, that Congressional committees cannot compel witnesses to make disclosures outside of clearly defined areas of investigation. The Smith Act decision says that a definite distinction must be made between advocating the violent overthrow of the Government as an abstract doctrine, which is not a crime, and advocating it so as to incite unlawful action, which is a crime.

All of these decisions favor the individual rather than the State, freedom rather than security, and liberty rather than authority. In ruling in favor of these undoubted values, the Court has fulfilled its historic function. For it has, in a sense, opposed current sentiment and the direction of the Executive and Legislative branches of government. Much as it did in the thirties, when its rulings drew anguished cries from liberals, it has acted to preserve traditional liberties. Again it has acted as a stabilizing influence, relatively immune from the pressures and passions that sway both citizens and political leaders.

Already this Supreme Court has come under heavy criticism for its decisions. And, not surprisingly, the attacks have come from the conservatives, one of whom, paradoxically enough, has revived the suggestion that members of the Supreme Court should be subjected to popular vote. Such a suggestion ignores the fact that a system of appointments to the Supreme Court frees it from the immediate popular pressures exerted on the other two branches and serves to strengthen our traditional system of checks and balances.

Although we do not lightly dismiss all who are opposed to these Supreme Court decisions, we nevertheless think that they have been made in the highest of democratic traditions which they strengthen and support. In so far as they are daring rulings, they reaffirm the health of our political life, for outside of a viable, resilient democracy they could not have been made.

NEXT WEEK

ROBERT A. GRAHAM writes about the Catholic Church in countries of East Europe seized by the Soviet Union since World War II.

"The bishops and faithful have been forced to exist under conditions of exceptional difficulty. They have had to fight with spiritual arms against a foe who wielded political, economic and ideological weapons with skill and ruthlessness."

CATHOLICS AND PROTESTANTS

AT THE RECENT Catholic Press Convention, the delegates took official notice of the sharp increase in religious tensions in certain areas of the country. Noting that these clashes "continue to cause anguish and concern to all residents of good will in the United States," the assembled editors resolved "that Catholics contribute to the easing of these tensions by their readiness competently to discuss areas of misunderstanding with their non-Catholic associates, as well as by their unconstrained cooperation with non-Catholics in common efforts to achieve those civic goals we all hold essential to the orderly development of our democratic society."

Judging by what has happened since, the editors passed their resolution just in time. Consider a few of the things that have happened in recent weeks, all calculated to give the Catholic editors ample opportunity to apply their good resolution on religious tensions.

Item One: Dr. Robert McAfee Brown of New York's Union Theological Seminary recently wrote —rather wryly, we presume—that Catholics seem to read the *Christian Century* with considerably more care than do Protestants. True to form, we did read the *Century* for June 5, this time with even keener interest than usual because the issue contained an article called "The Next Pope," by William Hubben. The author raises some interesting points, but here we want only to note that he refers to the Catholic Church, quite casually, as a "totalitarian church" and cooly proceeds to discuss Communism and Catholicism in terms of "rival totalitarianisms"—completely without explanation or argument, apparently with the idea that this is something "everybody knows" about the Church.

Even at that, though, we normally would not have paid too much attention to this piece. There have been many worse articles printed, and in recent years the flat charge of totalitarianism has become a standard gambit among many Protestant writers. But then we checked the author's identification and found that he was the editor of the weekly *Friends Journal*, which we take to mean that he is a Quaker, and this was just too much. When the peace-loving Friends start to belabor Catholics in public print, religious tensions *must* be on the rise.

Item Two: Then there was Paul Blanshard—there is always Paul Blanshard, it seems. Speaking in Burlington, Vermont, Mr. Blanshard gave the Catholic Church and the Catholic school system

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what the Burlington *Free Press* described as a "resounding thumping." He called the Pope "the greatest supreme dictatorial power in the world" (here Stalin's question about the Pope would seem relevant: "How many divisions does he have?") and said, "The Catholic school is not an American institution by any normal use of that word. . . ." Teachers in Catholic schools, according to Mr. Blanshard, "live in a kind of mental straitjacket," and the schools themselves use "slanted textbooks" and teach "warped history." He denounced "silent sabotage from the pulpit" (that silent sabotage is the best kind, *we* always say) which he charged has helped to defeat bond issues for the construction of public schools, and, perhaps unnecessarily, he expressed his "profound suspicions" about the general quality of Catholic education. Mr. Blanshard, in short, sounded very much like Mr. Blanshard, protesting, as always, that he was not an anti-Catholic and that he always avoided attacking the Catholic religion.

Item Three: Then there was Methodist Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam, a vice president of "Protestants and Others United for Separation of Church and State," who made his contribution to better group relations at the ground-breaking of the new School of International Service at Methodist American University in Washington.

Georgetown University, conducted by Jesuits, founded its School of Foreign Service in the nation's capital in 1919, and its effectiveness has been testified to by many government officials over the years since then. When plans for the new Methodist School were announced, the President of Georgetown, Father Edward B. Bunn, S.J., said: "We welcome the advent of American University into the field of foreign service. There is a great demand for more institutions to prepare more candidates to meet the needs consequent upon our national role of international leadership in the world."

At that same time, Bishop Oxnam said that the new school would train specialists for governmental foreign service "in the atmosphere of Protestant freedom, and condition them favorably to the free way of life." At the ground-breaking ceremonies last month, Bishop Oxnam returned to this theme, saying: "It is natural, perhaps even proper, that students trained by Jesuits in a Jesuit institution should graduate conditioned favorably to Vatican world policy. For us this conditioning raises serious questions from the standpoint of the maintenance of democracy." (Incidental information for those readers who might be interested: around The Commonweal, which is often severely criticized as "too liberal," the number of editors who were subjected to "Jesuit conditioning" has in recent years ranged from not more than three out of five to not less than one out of four. As far as we can tell, the "conditioning" they received in Jesuit universities—as students and as teachers—in no way blunted their interest in freedom, democracy and civil liberties.)

There they are, then, random examples from the last few weeks which seem to make further comment by us unnecessary. What can we say to a Bishop Oxnam or a Paul Blanshard? Very little, we fear. For the record we can only cite the contrast between the spirit they showed and that of President Eisenhower, who spoke on the same occasion as Bishop Oxnam but who was not present during the Bishop's remarks. "In the great foreign service of the United States," Mr. Eisenhower said, "we do not recognize race, color or creed—only merit."

For our part, we are willing to leave to the judgment of the American people which of these men better expressed the spirit we need in this country. Heaven knows, there are many weeks in which Catholics are embarassed because of wild charges hurled at Protestants by Catholic groups or individuals. This time the shoe seems clearly to be on the other foot.

ADMINISTRATION POWER POLICY

WHEN HE ISN'T stalking votes in his coonskin cap, Senator Estes Kefauver hunts for unsavory deals in the Eisenhower Administration's "public-private" power arrangements. In the second of these hunts he has, from the point of view of Administration officials, been only too successful. A few years ago Senator Kefauver led the investigation of the unhappily famous Dixon-Yates contract, and the facts unearthed by that investigation brought about an embarrassed Administration retreat.

Now the Senator has turned the attention of his anti-monopoly subcommittee to the Hells Canyon-Snake River public vs. private power dispute, and the strange procedures followed by the Office of Defense Mobilization in granting the Idaho Power Company "fast" tax write-off privileges.

Chairman of the Federal Power Commission Jerome Kuykendall has testified that his department's approval was given to Idaho Power's small-dam Snake River project, rather than to the Federal Hells Canyon plan, with the understanding that the private dams would be built at no cost to the gov-

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ernment, but Idaho Power later requested and received a special "wartime" tax write-off privilege. This privilege would have cost the treasury eighty-three and a half million dollars in taxes. Defense Mobilization Director Gordan Gray granted this tax privilege despite the disapproval of Secretary of the Interior Seaton, whose protests he failed to report to interested Senators. Director Gray's office withheld for five days the news that this write-off had been granted, and during these days the New York and San Francisco stock exchange records indicate a most unusual activity in Idaho Power Company shares. The facts are not all known as yet, but it seems clear that whoever profited here, it was not the tax-paying public.

After all these revelations, Idaho Power has surrendered its tax write-off license, in order to avoid "beclouding of the real issues"—whatever they might be. But the Senate has reversed its vote of last year for private dams, and approved the Federal single-dam project at Hells Canyon. If the House goes along with the Senate, it is expected that the President will almost certainly veto the new bill. Whatever happens, the Administration has another power controversy on its hands, an issue the Democrats are sure to use as campaign ammunition in 1958.

What President Eisenhower means by his concept of public-private "partnership" in the area of power and utilities has never been very clear. But if it involves preferential treatment for the great utilities companies, barely legal and questionably ethical official practices, huge private profit and public loss, he can hardly be surprised that it is unpopular. If this is not what Mr. Eisenhower means, let him look to his responsibilities. Senator Kefauver will be glad to help.

DESEGREGATION IN THE NORTH

NEW YORK CITY has for many years led the nation in the fight against racial discrimination, and it is now attempting to take still another step in banning segregation from the city's housing. A bill was introduced in the City Council which would make racial discrimination illegal even in privately-owned apartment houses. As a result of protest, however, chiefly from the city's Real Estate Board, the bill has been withdrawn for revision.

We are sorry that the New York City Council has been swayed by the real estate men. Their first argument against the bill is the old, long-discredited claim that desegregation will depress property values. Experience has shown that such a result comes about only when interested parties permit it to, and prevention of slum areas conserves and stabilizes property values. The second argument is that the bill is an invasion of privacy, and infringes the right of a private citizen to rent his property to anyone he chooses. This objection is slightly more valid, but obviously no citizen may exercise a right to the clear detriment of the rights of others, and this is the case here. Further, in New York a privately-owned restaurant, for instance, has the legal right to impose reasonable restrictions on the patrons it will serve but may not discriminate on the basis of race. And an apartment house seems no more privately-owned than a restaurant.

What is unfortunate about the New York controversy is that publicity concerning it has furnished aid and comfort to white supremacists in the South. Southern segregationists are fond of calling attention to the beam in the Northern eye in the matter of racial inequalities, and they can now cite the position of the New York Real Estate Board as paralleling their own.

This is not the case. No one in New York is denying the constitutionally-guaranteed right of a citizen to free use of unquestionably public facilities and utilities, and this right is being denied in the South. We disagree with the opponents of the New York bill, but even as we do we must point out in fairness that their position is not that of the White Citizens Councils. The New York bill, which we hope will soon be passed, represents a trail-blazing extension of already far-reaching civic responsibility for minority rights.

NEWS NOTE

THAT THE madness of the frantic fifties has not *quite* disappeared is suggested by a recent pronouncement by New York cafe owner Sherman Billingsley. A fortunate few may have missed the newspaper accounts of Mr. Billingsley's personal and professional tribulations in recent weeks, and for them it may be noted that he has been tried by labor troubles at the Stork Club, clashes with pickets, suits by employees and some house painters at whom it was charged he waved a pistol and flung obscenities. Of his weary days in court, police confiscation of his three pistols and the loss of his permit to carry a gun, Mr. Billingsley has said: "The whole thing was brought on by a bunch of racketeering Communists." Understand?

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Belloc and America

"AMERICA LEFT ITS IMPRINT UPON BELLOC, AND BELLOC HIS UPON IT"

FRANCIS E. McMAHON

THERE HAVE been certain personalities of modern Catholicism who defy stereotyped analysis or criticism. One was Léon Bloy. Another, Orestes Brownson. Still a third, Hilaire Belloc. As different as these men were—the differences were enormous—they had one trait in common. They were fiercely independent. Staunchly Catholic all, they can be the despair of the critic with the neat little categories of bourgeois Catholicism. These men fit into no commonplace categories. Hilaire Belloc in some ways fits least of all.

Consider some of the singular paradoxes of his career. Though neither a theologian nor a philosopher, he became one of the foremost Catholic apologists of his day. By temperament a skeptic, his books reflect a spirit of intense conviction. An ardent defender of democracy, he nevertheless praised Mussolini as a man of vision and integrity. His historical writings provoked the scorn of many professionals, but military strategists turned avidly to them for enlightenment. His first love was poetry, but the exigencies of the time carried him often away from the temple of the Muse. A melancholy strain in his nature was combined with the gaiety of a François Villon.

In his first-rate biography of Belloc, *The Life of Hilaire Belloc* [Farrar, Straus], Robert Speaight has exposed all sides of the man. He has produced an objective though sympathetic account. The greatness of Belloc emerges from these pages: the immense range of his interests and achievements, his powerful intelligence, his fearlessness in controversy, his dedication to the Truth as he saw it. At the same time, the weaknesses of Belloc are not ignored. Though Speaight much admires the man, he is no hero-worshipper.

Of a different character is *Belloc the Man* by Eleanor and Reginald Jebb [Newman]. Daughter and son-in-law of Belloc, they have set down their impressions of a man whom they knew intimately. It would be churlish to evaluate this work according to the strict canons of objectivity. The book springs largely from the heart; it has been molded by love and affection. It has its place in the literature about Belloc. Isolated, it is of little help in assessing his complete personality, his strength and his weakness. Once one has assimilated the work of Speaight, however, it can afford valuable insights.

Neither work attempts to discuss fully the impact of Belloc upon the American mind. Except for England and France, the countries of his forebears, Belloc probably knew this country best. His wife was a Californian. His first journey to this country was made, in semi-vagabond circumstances, in pursuit of the lady of his dreams, whom he had originally met in Europe. He returned several times later as a lecturer. There was little of the land he did not traverse. America left its imprint upon Belloc, and Belloc his imprint upon America. The complementary topics are worth exploring.

AFTER HIS fifth trip to the United States, Belloc published in 1923 his impressions in a book called *The Contrast*. Far from adopting a critical tone, Belloc evinced much admiration for the people and its institutions. There were certain things he did not like: the lack of privacy in the American community, the ceaseless noise, the tendency to conformity, the penchant for embracing intellectual fads. But Americans, he declared, were wrongly accused of worshipping wealth. This, he said, is the vice of Europe, not of the United States. Americans take satisfaction in the possession of money, and strive earnestly to acquire it. But, unlike the Europeans, they do not measure the degree of a man's moral worth by the amount of wealth he has.

He was enamored of our political and social institutions. In contrast to the corrupt and inefficient parliaments of Europe, there had been preserved in America, he declared, the principle of one-man rule. Universities, business corporations, local, state and federal governments embodied the principle that one individual must ultimately be invested with power and responsibility. He called it the Principle of Monarchy, and affirmed that the American Presidency was "today

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far the strongest Monarchy on earth." This appeared to be strange language for a man who had hailed the French Revolution as one of the greatest achievements in history, and who praised unreservedly the *Contrat Social* of Jean Jacques Rousseau. But Belloc had become wholly disillusioned with representative government divorced from a strong executive. He believed that the interests of the sovereign people—and the people, in his view, were truly sovereign—were best protected by one supreme head enslaved to no special interests.

The central theme of *The Contrast* was that Americans were a totally different breed. The United States was linked to the traditions of European culture, but these traditions, Belloc believed, had undergone profound transformation when implanted in the New World. An American priest and publicist, while visiting England, was shocked to hear Belloc declare that the only thing American and English Catholics had in common was the Mass. Presciently, he declared that with the dissolving of the Protestant ethic in America, and with the emergence of a pagan code, the Catholic Church would experience increasing conflict. He perceived, even in his time, America's Paul Blanshards coming over the horizon.

He warned Americans against making "entangling alliances" with the countries of the Old World. Neither the United States nor Europe would benefit by the strengthening of political ties. As Speaight says, his outlook here was that of an Irish-American isolationist. He despised the League of Nations. Belloc was not merely uncomfortable in the shrinking world of the twentieth century; he was definitely antagonistic towards it.

SO MUCH for Belloc's impressions of this country. The converse—his impact upon the American mind—cannot be assessed so easily. During his many sojourns here, he lectured on a variety of topics. The lecture tours were prompted chiefly by the need for money; throughout most of his life Belloc was plagued by financial worries. Although he complained that American Catholics would not buy his books, such works as *Europe and the Faith, The Servile State,* and *Survivals and New Arrivals* had a considerable vogue in the twenties and the early thirties. The serious Catholic college student of the time read Belloc with interest and often with enthusiasm. He was popular with some of the neo-humanistic followers of Irving Babbitt, despite his admiration for Rousseau. At one of the luncheon meetings that led to the launching of The Commonweal, he emphasized the importance of a weekly review in the formation of public opinion.

One hazards the opinion that in three areas he made his greatest impression in the American milieu. Long before others of his own time had made the point, Belloc had stressed the transcendent part which religion plays in the molding of a culture. It was a conviction he tenaciously adhered to, and which he reiterated in many of his works. It was religion that gave form and character to a culture; all else was conditioned by it. He developed the thesis, with specific application to Western civilization, in a series of lectures in 1937 at Fordham University on "The Crisis of Civilization." Our civilization was in peril, he contended, because it had all but lost its religious foundations. The Catholic Church, utilizing the social traditions of the Greco-Roman Empire, had brought civilized Europe into existence. With the disruption of religious unity in the sixteenth century, however, a process of disintegration had set in. Despite material advancements, the path ever since has been steadily downward. No civilization can survive the loss of its unifying religious principle. Western culture was now confronted with the following alternative: either the restoration of Catholicism or the extinction of the culture.

"The Faith is Europe and Europe is the Faith." This phrase of Belloc's was known wherever the man was known. The first part was not literally true. Belloc later claimed that he had been misunderstood. American Catholics naturally were not tempted to identify the Faith with Europe, and the most chauvinistic among them would not dare to claim that the Faith was America. But they could profit—and did—by Belloc's insistence that culture was the offspring of religious faith.

BELLOC'S historical writings—this is the second suggested area of his influence—prompted some Americans to take a second and more critical look at current interpretations of the past. His works, to be sure, produced a mixed reaction. The fastidious resented the absence of footnotes and references. Belloc, however, retorted that he was not writing for scholarly journals.

A more substantial criticism was provoked by errors of detail in his historical accounts. He could be astonishingly careless about certain minor matters. On

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the other hand, how many historians have taken the trouble to go over foot by foot the grounds on which some famous battles were fought? This Belloc did. It explains why, during the second world war, General Bedell Smith, Chief of Staff to General Eisenhower, asked for a copy of Belloc's *Six British Battles*. "That is the man I want to read," he said, "he has studied the thing on the spot."

Belloc as historian has been accused of bias. This much appears to be true: Against prevailing biases in historical interpretations, he countered with his own. The people whom he challenged—the Whig historians—sought to magnify the virtues of Protestantism as a cultural force and to undermine the prestige of Catholicism. Theirs was the "official" and fashionable view in Protestantized England. Their prejudices harmonized so well with the cultural milieu that they went undetected. His stood out sharply against the landscape. If Belloc betrays bias in his account of James II, likewise does Winston Churchill.

Whatever his defects, he at least succeeded in making history live. The man could capture the actuality of the past. This was due partly to his incomparable style and to his power of vivid portrayal. It was also due—and perhaps chiefly—to his conviction that authentic historical writing is the fruit of connatural knowledge. The historian must share the basic cultural traditions about which he writes; he must see history *from within*. Belloc wrote vividly—and often, though not always, competently—because he was at one with the men and the forces that had formed the institutions of the Western World.

THE THIRD AREA in which Belloc had influence was the economic. He was an unrelenting foe of modern Capitalism. Capitalism for him meant but one thing: a system in which a powerful few dominated and exploited a dispossessed many. The Reformation, by removing ethical restraints from economic life, had fathered it, he maintained. After the religious upheaval, the principles of usury and unbridled competition triumphed. There followed the growth of monopolies and the impoverishment of the masses. A state in which a propertyless majority was subjected to a few scheming financial overlords was a servile state. This was the fruit of Capitalism. The desperate masses began turning to Socialism and Communism for relief from their plight.

The answer of Belloc—and Chesterton—to the twin evils of Capitalism and Communism is well known. Distributism was not too bad a name. They wanted the destruction of monopoly and the promotion of widespread individual ownership. They urged the shifting of the center of economic gravity from the city to the land. Belloc also sought to meet the problems of a highly industrialized society. He did not share the anti-machine bias of many of his fellow-distributists. He advocated a differential tax to discourage the growth of chain-stores. In the case of necessarily large units of production, he favored distribution of the shares as widely as possible in small amounts. The whole emphasis was on diffused ownership as a basic requirement for human freedom.

When Capitalism was sustaining a crisis during the thirties, the economic program of Belloc and Chesterton —they must be considered together here—won a limited though lively support in this country. Prominent figures like Herbert Agar, Ralph Borsodi, Monsignor Luigi Ligutti, and Father Virgil Michel were influenced, as well as the Catholic Worker movement. Individuals and small groups here and there moved onto the land as practical Distributists. Others, though indisposed to abandon urban habits, eagerly preached the doctrine. The movement, however, never even began to achieve widespread acceptance. By and large it was regarded as a bit quixotic, and not coming to grips with all the complexities of modern society. The "prosperity" of the hot war, and later of the cold war, lessened interest in schemes for radical reform. Capitalism, moreover, had evolved into a somewhat less obnoxious system, with some of its grosser inequities eliminated.

But it would be rash to say that Belloc's ideas are completely irrelevant today. Postwar America has witnessed the acceleration of monopolizing tendencies. The small, independent entrepreneur sees himself threatened by the giants of industry, commerce and finance. Though millions of Americans enjoy exceptional prosperity, and glory in the gadgets in their homes, large numbers are up to their necks in indebtedness to the credit houses. Belloc certainly did not fully meet the social and economic problems of the present age. But works like *The Servile State* and *The Restoration of Property* can still be meaningful for those not persuaded that the current system of "free enterprise" is mankind's finest achievement.

INTEREST IN BELLOC has faded in the last fifteen years. His militantly Catholic approach had of course, prevented him from gaining a wide and sympathetic following in non-Catholic circles. But even among present-day Catholics he has apparently few devoted readers. Probably a sizable number of students in the Catholic colleges of this country have never heard of him, or at best have the vaguest knowledge about the man. Is his eclipse permanent or temporary? It is impossible, naturally, to say. His writings upon religion and culture have, in some respects, been superseded by the fuller and more-balanced works of Christopher Dawson. The vision of Maritain in many ways is vastly superior. Maritain has accomplished

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what it was apparently beyond the power of Belloc to do: to confront in all their dimensions the problems of a pluralistic world. Belloc was riveted too much to the past. The adaptation of Catholic principle to changing cultural epochs and to different civilizations was a task alien to his capacities and desires. Speaight has made the point well:

"He too readily confused the walls that man had made with the ramparts of eternity. For all his hunger for Paradise, he did not always distinguish between the gates of porphyry and the portcullis which had defied the barbarian. The Faith established and defined, the cultural city of Christendom, magnificent and crumbling—these are what he set out to defend. But his sailor's eyes, though they were accustomed to wide horizons, lacked the evangelist's audacity, and he did not even want to imagine what Catholicism would be like when it had been preached to all people, nor what expression it would wear when it had expanded to the uttermost ends of the earth."

But we must take great writers as they are, though they must be read with intelligence and discrimination. In his introduction to a recent edition of Belloc's *The Cruise of the "Nona,"* Lord Stanley of Alderley likens the author's versatile and powerful mind to "a whole city of fine buildings of every period and for every purpose." That mind indeed was a whole city. It was a rich city too, and a city of impressive vistas. But not every building in it is fine. It has its slums—his anti-Semitism, for instance—as well as its areas of beauty and distinction. Even some of its better structures reveal faulty construction. But it is a city laid out along grand lines. Its foundations are embedded in the hard rock of reality. And its noblest edifices soar majestically towards the sky. The intelligent explorer who ventures into it comes out a better man.

FRANCO'S SPAIN

Land of Contrast

MORRIS H. PHILIPSON

EVEN THE geography is medieval. There are great stretches of dead, dry, abandoned land, rust colored or ashen grey mesas, without a tree on the horizon, lying stiff under the vast clear hot blue sky. Then a city appears on a hilltop or in a valley, as self-contained and isolated as any fortressed city of the Middle Ages. It is not only where stone walls still encircle a town, such as Avila; it is true of every city of the north from Barcelona on the Mediterranean to the villages on the Atlantic. All across Catalonia, Aragon and Castile one feels that each city is an independent unit, and its relations to the surrounding nature are like those of an army of occupation garrisoned in a foreign country.

There is a fantastic quality to life in the cities. The rhythm of Spanish life is quite different from ours. The streets are emptied over the lunch hour and then sardine-packed through the late afternoon. Dinner is served at nine when the evening just begins. The contrasts in social classes are more pronounced: the beggars in rags, their children encrusted with dirt, with suppurating sores, pass the pink and black Rolls Royce in the street.

This fantasy quality has its romantic aspects; for example, we arrived at Zaragossa late one evening, after driving through the "Grand Canyon" for hours, and the moonlight on the various-sized domes of its cathedral made the city look like the ghost of an oriental oasis. Children who were well dressed wore navy blue sailor suits and cartwheel hats, and they were cared for by Victorian maids in black with white aprons. Matrons were driven about in chauffeured Chevrolets. The equivalent of the cheap car is a tin-looking open vehicle rather like a jeep but almost small enough for the "car bump" arenas at fair grounds.

Unamuno wrote of Spain as living off the highway of contemporary civilization. It struck us that Spain is not of this century at all. In order to "protect" Spain from the Left, Franco has turned the country into a living museum of nineteenth century life. The capital is elegant; other cities struggle for breath. Outside of Madrid there is a moldiness about everything, a crumbling, unswept, stubble-beard, down-at-the-heels quality. There is a desperate disparity between the snappy façades and the useless plumbing. The children and the gas lights and the outdoor food markets keep it Victorian, at best Edwardian. But the presence of donkeys and the excessive number of men in uniforms

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everywhere give Spain a character of something Napoleonic.

It is with the ever-present uniforms that your discomfort begins. The big Falangist sign of five red arrows and a yoke which stands at the entrance and exit of every city, village, hamlet in the country—like a statement of ownership—and the busts and portraits of Franco in every office, shop, restaurant, gnaw at you with the teeth of bad faith. You come to feel that this is what Germany must have been like under Hitler, and you do not want to admit to yourself that you ought not to be there at all. Instead, the bad faith translates itself into irritation. You complain against the stuffed drain pipes and the poor roads and the unreconstructed bombed buildings which remain twenty years after the Civil War. But then you remind yourself that as a tourist your significant relations here are more with the past than with the present. Paradoxically, for a tourist the present is only the "background" and in the forefront you try to keep the museums and the Roman ruins, the cathedrals and the Romanesque village churches.

SPAIN IS a singularly well-preserved museum of European history. The Romans were first to leave their mark. Their bridges still span nearly every river in the country. In Segovia the breath-taking aqueduct continues to be used. The great brown stones (fitted together without cement) still raise their clean strong arches in three gigantic tiers to fill a U-shaped valley and connect one hilltop with another. Today the water is brought through a pipe but still across the same Roman arches.

In Barcelona you travel within a space of two acres from the columns of a Roman temple to the medieval city with its Gothic cathedral, to the palace where Ferdinand and Isabella received Columbus parading with his souvenirs of "the Far East," to the sixteenth century palace of Charles V, ruler of more of Europe than any man since Caesar, more than any one man since his time. The local guide takes pains to say "You have great good things in America too; but we have some things here that are greater." You know that he is telling himself to be satisfied, and your admiration will help.

In Spain are to be seen the remains of one aspect of European history which left no imprint on the rest of the continent. For a thousand years the Islamic Arabs, dominating the Mediterranean from the Black Sea to Gibraltar, menaced Europe from the south with their perpetual threat. But only Spain presents visible effects of Islamic conquest. Perhaps the present time has something of this configuration, with Europe feeling itself similarly exposed on the east and threatened by the Russians. Perhaps, in a thousand years, the satellite countries of Eastern Europe will show the remnants of their occupation, the way Spain fondles its own survived past. The foreigner is always somehow assimilated.

The bright tiles, the fountains in the inner gardens, the Moorish dancing and the baleful music, the marvelously beautiful dark-eyed men and women, the peculiarly lavish but chaste architecture of the Arabs is still to be found everywhere. In Toledo there is a monument which was formerly a church, before that a synagogue, but originally a mosque. There the sense of the "tremendum" was achieved, not by Gothic height and breadth, but by an opulent monotony. The thick arches are nearly complete circles, repeated again and again along the nave and down both aisles. These arches rest on pillars where all the flora and fauna of nature seem squeezed into the capitals so that one feels the tremendous control of a mathematical intellect pressing the irrational, the luxuriating and unpredictable forces of life, into a narrow space of containment, while the rest of the structure is a hymn to order and beauty. It is like an answer to the soul's demand for the certainty of a clean calm full repetition.

But surely the Gothic cathedrals are the glory of Spain. Throughout the north they stand, resplendent and challenging, sometimes fortresses, like that at Avila, sometimes jewel boxes like the most famous one at Burgos.

There is one striking contrast between all of them and the Gothic cathedrals of France. In Spain one can never see the whole nave unobstructed. One cannot enter and look down the length of the cathedral because there is always a choir built across the nave facing the high altar. These two are often joined by a corridor, lined with iron grills—a complete church within the cathedral. The structure is like a Spanish house built around an inner court. Unlike the effect of a French cathedral in which the soul is invited to expand and rise, the Spanish cathedral seems to drive one back into himself. The narrowing construction of one unit inside of another, each inner one of greater importance, seems to drive one all the more into his

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own depths and invites him to the inner altar. Even the excluding and protecting grill work has a particularly powerful symbolic value. It enables one to see through to the altar from the outside—whereas only a participant may arrive at it directly.

The styles of this arrangement offer their own commentary on Christian history. While the bulwarking cathedral is Gothic and of stone, the choir is Renaissance and of carved dark wood, subtle and elegant in a restrained self-conscious manner. The altar is usually Baroque, made of plaster as often as of marble, and extravagant with columns like gyrating smoke, and statues of the Virgin clothed in rich robes.

THE SPANISH cathedrals offer tremendous variety. In Barcelona one enters a mammoth cave of another world, black but for the brilliant pure colors streaming like rainbows through a few small high stained-glass windows. In Salamanca you are inside of the clarity of the mind. It is nearly an object lesson in cultural history to consider that this was the church of Miguel de Unamuno. The light is strong in the tall building and the sculpture is not only sharp but painted in bright colors, and one senses both precision and amplitude there. That philosopher's thought seems like a reflection of this plateresque-decorated building: a vigorous, intricate, clearly-articulated corridor all around an ineffable mystery.

In Burgos one feels most strongly the sense of being in a country untouched by Reformations and Revolutions. The very walls of the Gothic cathedral are alive with stone figures and faces—calling out, weeping and praying, jeering and beatific. No broken noses here. No statue of the Virgin arching her arm about a vanished Infant. The superb sculpture looks as fresh and daring as if the cathedral were newly opened. Such a wealth of sculpture! One has the feeling that all that frozen lather is just barely within control of the Gothic artists, that it is just a few degrees from the Baroque.

The Baroque has its sphere as well, but it is not the baby-blue, pink and gilded Baroque of Bavaria and Austria. It is rather the dark-laced intricacies of the Escorial where the central cathedral is spider-webbed about by one courtyard after another. One might make a comparative study of the architecture of the Escorial and the structure of *Don Quixote*. Surely that extraordinary pattern of Cervantes' shows similarities to its contemporary monastery-palace in the way its central "story" is surrounded by other tales, each going off for a complete turn by itself but linked to the others by always leading back to the center.

In these circumstances the acts and gestures of devotion which you observe are entirely credible. On the night before Easter Sunday, in Toledo, we saw the street procession of the penitents hooded in high peaked masks of green, hidden under cloaks of black marked with a white cross down the length of their bodies. On their shoulders they carried the statues of the crucified Jesus and the suffering Virgin—blazing with jewels of a diamond tiara, emeralds, rubies—to the marches of a military band, while the wind blew at the thousands of candles in the dark night. It is the sense of public anonymity that strikes you. Each of the uniformly masked penitents is known only to God.

It is one thing to see middle-aged people fall to the floor at the entrance of a cathedral and walk on their knees to the chapels of the aisles; but it is very much more moving to recognize their complete lack of self-consciousness, the absorption, the non-apologetic integrity which expresses their inner single-mindedness. While there is a politeness, a formality and self-restraint about the relations *between* individuals in Spain, one gets the impression that the un-self-conscious, the unrestrained dramas are all played out *within* each individual.

The public appearance is always one of decorum and harmony; they seem to aspire to the sort of beautiful proportions you find in a public square like the Plaza Mayor at Salamanca. But the inner appearance, their secret life, must be exceptionally tense and volatile, otherwise the fandango dancing and the gypsy music would not have the significance it has for them. The flamenco rhythms, the snake-tight clothes and the hammer-heeled dancing, the women in orange flounces probably function for the Spaniard the way cowboy and Indian movies work for us. The world of castanets, silk costumes, and dances elaborate as animated Moorish Arabesques is as far removed from ordinary Spanish life (and stands in the same relation to it) as the Wild West from life in the United States today.

THIS OUTER DECORUM results in what seems to be passivity. Some young people talk about politics with a wistful self-depreciation. "Things would be better," they say, "if we could have a little more freedom." But they say it the way an American woman might say, "Things would be better if we had a woman President." And with about as much conviction. You cannot help wondering in what sense these apparently cowed and polite people are the "same" Spaniards who fought Europe's bloodiest civil war in the past century. But these are the people who have lived through twenty years of Falangist rule. Germany has survived Hitler and Italy has outlived Mussolini, but the Spaniards are still within the barracks of el Caudillo.

While many a wall is painted with such mottos of Franco as "No liberty without order," one soon feels that this is hardly a culture devoted to the rule of law. On the contrary, the overwhelming implication is that

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the Spaniards' primary belief is in the rule of chance. They play with it in their national sport, bullfighting, where the odds are on life and death. Bullfighting is a visible representation of possible relations between skill and chance.

A more arbitrary one is the ever-present National Lottery. Old women and blind men sell tickets for it on every streetcorner, exhorting you to "take a chance." Like bullfighting, the lottery offers you an opportunity to tempt fate. Just as the rugged countryside does: with its uncertainty, danger, and luck. The vivid contrasts which visitors to Spain always talk about—the sharp separation of towns from the land, the Goya landscapes of black-green trees lost on a plain of rusted sand, the broiling air just outside the coolness of the shaded gardens at Aranjuez—all have a quality of making you aware of "taking a risk" whenever you step outside of the altar-centered church, the inner-square-centered house, and the public-square-centered towns.

In Spain even the geography is medieval.

REWRITING A CLASSIC

Lives of the Saints

DONALD ATTWATER

THE FIRST best seller in the history of book publishing was James of Voragine's *Legenda Sanctorum* which was first printed, in Latin, in 1470. Under the name of *The Golden Legend,* it has since been frequently translated and reprinted in many tongues down to our own day. It had, too, numerous successors, in the various work of such as Ribadeneyra, Rosweyde, Giry, Morin, Baillet, Butler, Godescard, Guérin, Baring-Gould and, in the past dozen years, the Benedictines of Paris. But of the many who have in different times and places sought to present the written lives of the saints in a way suited to the needs of their era, the palm goes to Alban Butler: that is the verdict of the late Father Hippolyte Delehaye, who was president of the Bollandists, the Jesuit editors of the *Acta Sanctorum,* from 1912 to 1941.

Alban Butler was born in England, of an old county family of Northamptonshire, in 1710, but he spent the greater part of his life abroad, first as a schoolboy, seminarist and professor at Douay, later as president of the English college at Saint-Omer, where he died in 1773. His *Lives of the Primitive Fathers, Martyrs and Other Principal Saints* was first published in 1756-59 in London. After the third edition appeared at the end of that century, at Edinburgh, the work was constantly reprinted; it had an influence on English Catholics of late penal and early emancipation times, and then on other English-speaking Catholics, second only to the monumental work of Bishop Richard Challoner himself.

The original text of Alban Butler's work, more or less in its integrity, was republished and read, quoted and consulted, well into the present century, and it was not until 1926-38 that the whole work, then in twelve volumes, was for the first time drastically revised and brought up to date. The amount of labor and research entailed by this task can be known only to the man who did the greater part of it, that fine scholar the late Father Herbert Thurston, S.J., to whose learning and religious spirit the merits of the "new Butler" are wholly due. Father Thurston died in 1939, and when it was resolved to undertake a further revision and bringing-up-to-date, to mark the bicentenary of the original publication, the work was entrusted to the present writer.

Among those who have never had occasion to study Butler's *Lives* attentively it is commonly assumed that it was written simply as a "popular" work of religious edification, with all the faults of dubious history and critical insufficiency that so commonly beset such works. Certainly, Butler wrote for edification. As Father Thurston pointed out, "Butler's main purpose in writing was undoubtedly the spiritual profit of his readers," and most excellently he wrote, in a solid, scriptural, practical, somewhat austere spirit that still has a strong appeal to English Christians. What is overlooked is that Alban Butler was not one of those people who seem to think that good scholarship is inconsistent with "popular" piety, that true religion can be well served by historical falsity or doubtful tales presented as though they were factual truth.

Butler was a holy priest; he was also a sound and conscientious scholar, and in writing saints' lives for ordinary readers he was, as I have written elsewhere, "as critical a hagiographer as the state of knowledge and available materials of his age would allow, and if he from time to time records as facts miracles and other

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Mr. Attwater describes the revision on Butler's *Lives,* for the publication of which P. J. Kenedy & Sons received the Thomas More Association Medal as "the most distinguished contribution to Catholic publishing during the past year."

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events which we now, for one reason or another, have to question or definitely reject, he neither attaches undue importance to them nor seeks to multiply them: holiness meant to Butler humbleness and charity, not marvels." That combination of spiritual profit and sound scholarship Father Thurston and his collaborators did their best to carry on in the revised edition.

For an example taken almost at random, there is St. Christopher, who on the strength of an old tale is so widely invoked as a patron saint of travelers. There certainly was a martyr named Christopher, and that is about all that can be said concerning his life. Butler devoted to him a short page, wherein he does not narrate the legend but discourses briefly on his name, "Christ-bearer," expressing "his ardent love for his Redeemer, by which he always carried him in his breast as his great and only good." In the "new Butler" the famous story is recorded in detail, from the pages of the *Golden Legend,* for as Father Thurston wrote in 1937: "Where such stories have become familiar and dear to the devout believers of earlier generations, it did not seem right to pass them by entirely unnoticed, even though the extravagance of the fiction is patent to all who read."

THIS RAISES a point that is often misconceived. Of all the questions asked me about Butler's *Lives,* the most common is: "What sort of thing did you leave out as inappropriate or inadvisable for inclusion?" The question rests on a misunderstanding. So far as particular saints and the details of their history are concerned, the problem was not so much what of Butler to leave out, but what to add.

A work that aims at a relative completeness is not a negative undertaking; critical hagiography is not an exercise in leaving out what appears to be untrue, but of recording and discussing it. At a different level from Butler, the *Acta Sanctorum* of the Bollandists devotes as much attention and care to the saints who probably never existed as to those who most certainly did. For instance, there were no such people as SS. Barlaam and Joasaph or SS. Galation and Episteme: the first form a Christianized version of the legend of Siddartha Buddha, the second are the hero and heroine of a Christian continuation of the Greek romance of Clitophon and Leucippe. Butler ignored both couples; the "new Butler" says something about each of them. Few of the persons dealt with by Butler are omitted from the revision, and then only for good reason; Clement of Alexandria is one, for he was formally excluded from the Roman Martyrology in 1749, as Butler himself notes.

What called for a drastic cutting down of the original text was, in the first place, not the matter but the manner: in a word, the author's verbosity. Butler's writing was in a high degree leisurely and discursive, even for a leisurely and discursive age. In *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,* Edward Gibbon refers to Butler's *Lives* as "a work of merit"; we are told by the author's nephew, Charles Butler, that in conversation with him Gibbon even praised its style. Surely, as Father Thurston remarks, Gibbon was merely being polite, and not without a suspicion of irony.

Alban Butler could and did expatiate at length on, and draw lessons from, the virtues of a saint of whose actual life the records are of the scantiest, so that what he wrote of one in such general terms could with equal likelihood be said of another. He piled up words, clauses and sentences; and, though he was English to the heart, he wrote his own language as one who had lived so much of his life in France. There is in existence a copy of the first edition of the *Lives* annotated by the outstanding figure among English Catholics of the eighteenth century, Bishop Challoner. I have not had the opportunity to examine it, but I am told that he anticipates the judgment of a later time: "Excellent, but verbose to satiety," is his verdict. For the editors, then, it was often a question, not simply of blue-penciling phrases or a whole paragraph or even a page, but of entirely rewriting.

The only really notable omissions from the original text are two, of which the first is Butler's daily exhortation. These were retained in shortened form in the first revised edition (1926-38), but in the second they have been discarded almost entirely. They were excessively repetitious and monotonous, and few people nowadays would have the patience to wade through them. That is a pity, for they breathe a spirit of faith, hope and charity, of fundamental Christianity, of which we can never have enough. They convey, too, an impression of Alban Butler himself that is altogether lovable and inspiring of respect, a man of exquisite gentleness and courtesy, and this impression is borne out by all his work. But however good the content, there is no point in giving up valuable space to matter which, because of the way it is written, very few people are going to read.

The other considerable omission is Butler's small-type notes and dissertations, such as those on the writings of St. John Chrysostom and St. Cyril of Alexandria. These are outside the scope of what is required in a collection of saints' lives today, and much of Butler's erudition is now out of date. But in any case this omission is only a return to the very first edition; though they appeared in the second and subsequent editions, they were excluded from the first, on the advice of Bishop Challoner. In their place Father Thurston substituted summary commentaries and bibliographical notes, of which Father Delehaye wrote that they "give the 'new Butler' a scientific value which makes this work of edification a tool for students as

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well." These have, of course, all been retained in the second revised edition, with the addition of many later bibliographical references.

An outstanding difficulty in such a task as revising Butler's *Lives* is where to go for information. The latest trustworthy contribution to this or that saint's biography or hagiological problem is not necessarily between the covers of a catalogued book: it may well be in the periodical publication (perhaps a quite obscure one) of some learned society, and such publications are legion; and those articles and essays, when found, are not by any means always written in Latin or French or German or Italian.

Here the indispensable helps are the bulletins of publications in the *Analecta Bollandiana* (in itself, of course, a unique treasury of sources and research), the Bollandist commentary on the Roman Martyrology (1940), and such things as the book reviews and bibliographical supplements of the Louvain *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique*. Without them, such a work as Butler's could never have been thoroughly revised and expanded. And when the task is finished, even were it done perfectly, it is only provisional: for the unremitting work of scholars is continually bringing forth something new or a new aspect of something old, and every year the Church formally recognizes the holiness of more of her children. (Incidentally, information about new *beati* is not always so easily got hold of as one might suppose.)

Father Thurston's researches had to range over the relevant studies and the new beatifications and canonizations of one hundred and seventy-five years—a bewildering task. Now it has been carried on for another twenty-five years. Some day, perhaps, someone will undertake to write an entirely new Lives of the Saints in English: but he will never be able to forget that he is treading in the steps of Alban Butler.

WALKING IN SWITZERLAND

Requires balance.
    Altitudes are for Angels, but
    mankind can not stay put
when a mountain's the view. Dance
of its urge in him, expanse
of spirit needs an entrance
    to the absolute: the mountain.

One altitude,
    one alp, if it is tall enough,
    demands man's mastering the stuff
he's made of. Amplitude
of spirit needs the magnitude
it is. Some saints for their beatitude
    climbed mountains to be certain.

JOHN FANDEL.

THE SCREEN

GO TO THE MOVIES AND SEE THE WORLD

IT IS NOT hard to understand why Darryl F. Zanuck's production of "Island in the Sun" is having difficulty in the South. This is perhaps the most outspoken film about interracial problems since "Lost Boundaries." However, while the movie frankly calls a spade a spade, it does little digging. And what it lacks in depth, it tries to make up for with a plethora of characters and episodes.

From Alec Waugh's crowded and lengthy novel, Alfred Hayes has written a surface-skimming script for a cast nearly as handsome as the imaginary Island of Santa Marta itself (the British West Indies, photographed in CinemaScope and bright, clear De Luxe Color). There are James Mason, as a planter—moody, unpleasant, jealous of anyone who even looks at his wife, insecure in spite of the fact that he belongs to one of the Island's oldest families—and Patricia Owens as his perplexed wife. There are Harry Belafonte, as an aggressive West Indian, a leader in politics and labor, determined to guide his people to self-rule in this British Crown Colony, and Dorothy Dandridge, as a clerk whose ambition to rise is by no means hindered by her stunning good looks. These two start together but go their own ways when Dorothy and the British Governor's aide-de-camp (John Justin) fall in love, and Harry is attracted to Mason's sister-in-law (Joan Fontaine), a widow who falls in love with the labor leader. Still another twosome is made up of Joan Collins, as Mason's sister, and Stephen Boyd, as the Governor's son. Their pre-marriage love affair provides another of the plot's complications, but it is mainly two events that throw the Islanders into a dither and make them reconsider values. A visiting American journalist writes an article for the local paper saying that the Fleury family (to which James Mason and Joan Collins belong) is typical of the color problem: Mr. Fleury (Basil Sydney) is part Jamaican. Then Mason, driven not by the sudden discovery of his mixed blood but by jealousy, kills the man (James Rennie) he wrongly suspects of being his wife's lover. These two crises are polished off in the soap opera manner they deserve.

It is probably not Director Robert Rossen's fault that he was unable to get noteworthy performances from his cast. Mason comes through well, and so does John Williams as the chief of police who traps him into confession. But most of the cast are merely decorative and their roles are written in such a shallow way that they can do little with them. Belafonte, especially decorative, is not yet an accomplished enough actor for the difficult role of the leader. The director

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was confronted with the problem of having to hurry. He had to establish his characters, show them briefly before rushing on to the next episode, introduce color problems, sex problems and then hurry to the finale with as much cozy pairing off as possible. Although "Island in the Sun" could have gone farther, it deserves a hand for being as outspoken as it is on the racial question. And as a travel poster for the Caribbean, it should send customers flocking to the travel agencies.

A COUPLE OF newly arrived foreign films may not exactly send tourists abroad, but they do show off their locales invitingly. "Julietta," a French movie with English sub-titles, is a charming and wacky little comedy about a young girl whose imagination soars far beyond the normal flights of fancy. Her engagement to a middle-aged prince is not to her liking, except as a starting point for her dreams of future widowhood. On the way to Paris with her mother, the girl rushes from the train at Poitiers to return a cigarette case to the handsome man who was sitting next to her. When she's left behind, she has to spend the night at his country house; and the next day, after he's returned to the city, she decides to stay on at this convenient hideaway from the prince. This leads to complications when her unwilling host turns up with his fiancée and later when the prince and her mother catch up with her. However, the girl, by this time installed in the attic, uses her imagination and unlimited supply of fish stories to save even the tightest situation.

Although Director Marc Allegret allows "Julietta" to slip into absurd slapstick at times and the script gets somewhat repetitious, the comedy is pleasantly amusing and Dany Robin is delightful as the scatterbrained girl. In his best matinee-idol manner, Jean Marais is rather stuffy as her embarrassed host—until Julietta's tall tales knock the stuffing out of him.

BEING SHOWN along with "Julietta" in New York is a short that deserves attention. "A Visit with Pablo Casals," produced and directed by Robert Snyder in the South of France, under a commission from the Mannes College of Music, focuses on this famous cellist who is the foremost interpreter of Bach. Casals is shown wandering through the streets of Prades, where he has lived since the Spanish Civil War, talking to his neighbors, in his studio coaching the American cellist Madeline Foley in several charming sequences, and finally visiting the Monastery of St. Michel de Cuxa where he plays Bach's "Suite No. 1 in G Major for Unaccompanied Cello." Accompanying the fine sound track are some wonderful close-ups of the master's hands in action and of his impressive face.

WHILE "Scandal in Sorrento" doesn't add up to much as a movie, this import from Italy does show off both a beautiful locale and Sophia Loren in CinemaScope and Technicolor. But both Vittorio De Sica and Miss Loren, who star in the film, and Dino Risi, who directed it, must realize by now that it takes more than De Sica's amiable hamming, Miss Loren's ample figure and some lovely scenery to make a movie.

De Sica plays a middle-aged Don Juan who returns to his hometown Sorrento as police chief and who starts in at once courting a widowed fishwife (played by Sophia). His pursuit of the beauteous Sophia is upset by the fact that his priest-brother is trying to evict her from their house. Further, Sophia is really in love with a man of her own age (Antonio Cifariello). All this has a familiar ring; and, except for a couple of bright comedy scenes (De Sica coaching young Antonio to be a policeman; a group of seminarians disturbing De Sica and Loren at a rendezvous) the audience will feel they've been through all this before—and under more amusing circumstances. The dubbed-in sound track doesn't help the reality of the situation or the comedy either. But Sorrento looks awfully inviting.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

COMMUNICATIONS

"RETREAT FROM THE WELFARE STATE"

Arundel, Sussex, England.

TO the Editors: Since I dispatched my article, "Retreat from the Welfare State" [May 17], certain proposals for a national superannuation scheme have been outlined by the Labor Party, and it is understood that the Tories will be bringing forward a rival set of proposals in the near future. It is possible that some reports about all this have appeared in the American press, and had I known about it in time, I should have made some references to the matter in my article.

Nevertheless, nothing has happened since I wrote that article to make me change the view expressed therein that the principle of the abolition of want has been abandoned. The Labor Party's proposals are nothing but a very ordinary piece of pie-in-the-sky, and the miserably inadequate help suggested for those too old to qualify under the new scheme would mean that for years to come, millions of old people would go to their graves in misery and want.

The nature of the Tory scheme has not yet been revealed. It is understood, however, that it will be voluntary, and not compulsory, like that of the Labor Party. This suggests that there would be even less

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money for distribution, so that it is hardly likely that old age pensioners would fare any better under it till the new pension rights matured.

In these circumstances I withdraw nothing that I said, and stand by the clear implication of my article that, had the original Beveridge Plan been adhered to, its assumptions being corrected wherever they had proved clearly mistaken, we should by now have had a satisfactory solution of the whole problem of caring for the aged. That we have not got this, and are for many years unlikely to get it, is due to the fact that parliamentary democracy demands a greater degree of moral responsibility than most electorates seem able to command. The inference is not that parliamentary democracy should be abolished, but that moral responsibility should be more widely cultivated than it is.

J. L. BENVENISTI.

"ART AND THE CHURCH"

New York, N.Y.

TO THE EDITORS: The present situation of art and the Church, as put forth by Frank Getlein [June 14] in an avalanche of amusing and, at times, telling statements of personal prejudice, is indeed a sad one but his is a negative statement and one which can only console those who feel that salvation in matters of religious art can come largely from the usual sources since the "experts" are always arguing with one another.

It is, unfortunately, often true that those whose training and experience should be sought by the authorities are left alone; also that many new churches are not shining examples of architectural design, but I wonder whether Mr. Getlein has not allowed his distaste for the National Shrine in Washington to slip sadly when he labels the building a "Byzantine wedding cake." On a previous occasion I had the opportunity to suggest that this building is one caught in the web of time and there was little that could be done about it. Even so, would it not be possible for Mr. Getlein, since he writes of *the present state of art and the Church* (and so we must assume that he has a wide knowledge of what is or has been done in this country in the past decade) to find examples of very creditable church architecture, first rate sculpture and painting and also a respectable amount of well designed and well executed liturgical appurtenances.

I can easily agree with Mr. Getlein when he states that ". . . it was the magnificence of Renaissance church art that was partly responsible for what we have today." Whether his strictures of what he terms neo-Egyptian interpretations are valid can be argued but I wonder whether his enthusiastic sponsorship of Rico Lebrun's "Crucifixion" does not range him among the extremists of another sort!

At any rate, Mr. Getlein's sad and personal comments on art and the Church today remind me of a dream I have entertained for many years—the dream of a great national exhibition of *present* religious art in these United States in which would be gathered all the fine things we *can* find in our churches; then first-rate enlarged photographs of the best churches, schools, convents, seminaries; fine sculpture and painting, stained glass, textiles, silverwork, mosaics, enamels, and so forth. And several years' preparation and adequate funds would make it possible to gather examples of fine *potential* religious work designed and executed by artists who up till now have not produced anything for the Church but who would more than welcome the opportunity. I really believe that such a well-planned exhibition, held to a high level of excellence, both in design and execution, would surprise and delight many of us and would certainly surprise many of our friends abroad.

In the meantime, why not accentuate the positive when we see it—no matter how small may be the evidence within the limited range of our immediate experience!

MAURICE LAVANOUX,
Secretary,
Liturgical Arts Society.

CHILDREN'S BOOKS

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: A Catholic authority in matters of Sacred Scripture has just written me about *Lands of The Bible* which I recommended in the spring list of Children's Books [May 24]. This learned reader points out several errors in the text.

I am very grateful for the correction and, at the same time, gratified that the list is perused so carefully. So though I still recommend the book for its pictures, maps and general layout, I hasten to caution Catholic parents about the text.

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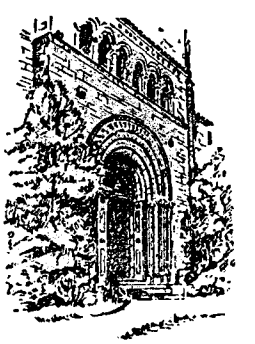

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FAITH IN OURSELVES

"WE LIVE in a muffled age, in which men bear witness to their loyalties, their faiths or their principles either apologetically, or in double negatives." This fairly common lament was made in a recent issue of the London *Times Literary Supplement;* it would have been equally appropriate in the *Times* of New York, maybe more so.

But on Monday, June 17, something happened. The Supreme Court, handing down three important decisions, fairly shouted to the world that America still believes in, and intends to live by, the principles of democratic freedom. The effect was electrifying.

In a lead editorial the next morning the New York *Times* described June 17 as "A Day for Freedom." In the afternoon the exuberant *Post* called it "Democracy's Day in Court." The Washington *Post and Times Herald* hailed the Court for "reaffirming its guardianship of individual liberty," a reaffirmation "especially needed and long overdue."

Beleaguered partisans like this writer who ever since this nervous decade began have found themselves fighting month after month, year after year for the democratic principles learned in grade school, could not help but feel jubilantly vindicated. There is a real exhilaration in the Court's sudden clean affirmations, after all the suspicion, confusion, obfuscation, rationalization, doubletalk and doublethink that have characterized America's civil liberties controversies since 1950. It was as if the Court had snapped on the lights and shown all of us what kind of country we have here.

What has the Court said in recent weeks that aroused such furor? In the Jencks case it simply said that if you are going to convict men on secret evidence, the evidence can no longer remain secret.

In the Watkins case, it said that when Congress investigates, it must state what it is investigating and why. Investigations are not an end in themselves; they may not be turned into trials or carried out merely in order to "expose." They must be related to the legislative powers of Congress.

In the Smith Act cases, the Court held that the mere advocacy of an idea, even a repulsive idea, is not a civil crime. If a man is to be punished for attempting to overthrow the government, his conviction must somehow be connected with action; an abstract advocacy is not enough.

In the case of John Stewart Service, the Court said that if government agencies set down rules for their own personnel, they must abide by them. Mr. Service was fired in 1951 as a "security risk." State Department rules required the Secretary to consider all the evidence, complete files, briefs and arguments presented. But Service, whose good name as well as job were at stake, was not given this courtesy.

However welcome these decisions were in some quarters, it must be remembered that elsewhere June 17 will be looked on as a day of infamy. In these circles Earl Warren's name and fame will forever be held in contempt. Why? Certainly not because those who will react this way are opposed to democratic principles and fair play. To claim that would be as absurd as saying that those who rejoice in the decisions do so because they are either knavishly pro-Communist or foolishly anti-security.

I think that if the truth be told, the bitter critics of the Court feel as they do because they are sincerely convinced that in these perilous times we just can not afford to be free, or at least as free as any sensible reading of the Constitution would permit us to be.

Now it is true there is nothing absolute about our civil liberties. We could survive without them and still avoid full slavery. In time of war, for instance, certain freedoms may be set aside temporarily in the interests of security. No less a leader than Abraham Lincoln himself was willing to withdraw the right of *habeas corpus*. Similarly, some honest men today may believe that our situation is perilous enough to require drastic steps.

But what is to be said for those who want it both ways? What is to be said for those who ask the Supreme Court to guard the Constitution and at the same time demand that the Justices ignore not only the spirit of that document but its clear applications?

I am afraid that is precisely what some of the Court's critics are asking. And to its credit, the Court has bluntly refused to play such a game. In effect it has told us: "If you want to live by your Constitution, granting its freedoms to all, this is how you have to live."

Argument will rage, an ancient argument old as human societies, between the proponents of "freedom" and the proponents of "security." The argument, I am inclined to believe, is founded on the differences between men. The Supreme Court did not create it, though it may be said that the Court by throwing its weight and prestige on the side of "freedom" has shown partisanship. This is probably true. But it is no argument against the Court. It is an argument against the Constitution itself. For the Constitution, though it provides for "security" (the insecure society is not truly free), is not perfectly balanced between the two values. It is weighted in favor of freedom. The government it chartered rests on the everlasting paradox that in America's liberty is America's security.

JOHN COGLEY.

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Lightness and Significance for Summer Reading

THE AWAKENED. By Zoe Oldenbourg. Translated by Edward Hyams. Pantheon. $4.95.

By JOHN F. SULLIVAN

THE VAGARIES of public taste being what they are, it is quite impossible to predict that any given book will actually make the best seller lists. However, the auspices for at least a summer season sojourn on these lists by *The Awakened* must be pronounced most favorable. It has, as they say, a lot of things going for it.

To begin with, it is a novel by a beautiful Frenchwoman. True, Zoe Oldenbourg is a bit over the currently fashionable age for feminine French novelists—one must suppose her two children leave her little time to drive fast sports cars—and she is not a native of France, having been brought there as a refugee from the Russian revolution when she was nine.

Secondly, she has scored solid triumphs with two historical novels, *The Cornerstone* and *The World Is Not Enough*. They won at least adequate critical acclaim, and *The Cornerstone* took both a *Prix Femina* and a Book-of-the-Month Club nomination.

Thirdly, *The Awakened* is primarily a love story—a simple variation on the trustworthy Romeo and Juliet plot—but with the nowadays essential adjuncts of religious and racial themes. These are not, however, of the sort to disturb or challenge; in fact, by a kind of stupendous *tour de force,* the novel manages to be at once both Catholic and Jewish.

Finally, although I suspect that the translation is in many places a bumbling one, the novel reads easily; not even the "deep" parts need be skipped by the casual reader. In short, it combines the traditional "lightness" of summer reading with enough "significance" so that no reader need feel guilt at whiling away some hours with it.

But nothing in what I have said in itself condemns this novel. It implies, perhaps, some cynicism, some deliberate fabrication of a commercial success. This is very likely unfair. It seems probable that the novel is actually quite sincere. Its real defects are technical, obliterating from it the real emotion that may well lie behind it.

The plot depends on a sense of social stratification that may become annoying to American readers. The hero, Ilya Lanskoi, comes from a Russian refugee family. He is largely self-educated, poor, a factory hand. He falls desperately in love with Stephanie Lindberg, who loves him with equal desperation. But she is the daughter of a professor, who is horrified at the notion of his daughter becoming involved with a man so much beneath her. I suppose that even an American professor might react similarly, but I can hardly believe that everyone involved would talk so much about the "degrading" sordidness of such an alliance.

However, we can certainly accept such a conflict, especially since it is fortified by the fact of religious differences: Ilya is of course Russian Orthodox, the Lindbergs are German Jews converted to Catholicism. But in the end, we cannot accept the conflict, because it is destroyed by the very technique of telling the story.

The novel alternates in point of view between Ilya and Stephanie, and the Ilya who can so articulately analyze his emotions is hopelessly inconceivable as the theoretical character named Ilya, the crude repairer of radios. Obviously the Ilya who tells his story is, as is Stephanie, only another name for the author herself, not a thoroughly created character at all.

Religion, as has been suggested, forms a kind of atmosphere for this novel, but it is never more than part of the setting, like Paris or the coming of the war, for this is not a seriously religious novel. For Professor Lindberg, religion is real and important, but for Stephanie and Ilya it is most of the time only a background against which to move. They suffer through events on which religion ought to have an immense bearing, but both seem curiously almost unaware that it can mean anything but a convention of society. Finally, it must be admitted, Stephanie does seem to find herself, discarding the new faith of her father for the ancient faith of her fathers. But even this is perhaps canceled out by the ambiguous structure of the novel.

Almost certainly the best things in the novel are the vivid glimpses, like those found in a series of *National Geographic* color plates, that it provides of the Russian liturgy, the quaint and charming flavor of life in the Parisian refugee colony. Surely this flavor springs from Miss Oldenbourg's own memories of a difficult yet happy youth. But all the rest is only dimly real.

When Lives Were Defined

DAY OF INFAMY. By Walter Lord. Henry Holt. $3.95.

By THOMAS F. CURLEY

IN HIS Foreword, Mr. Lord remarks that nearly every American alive and aware at the time can remember how he heard of the news of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. "He marked the moment carefully, carving out a sort of mental souvenir, for instinctively he knew how much his life would be changed by what was happening in Hawaii."

"Changed" is a pale word. Like Mr. Bishop's, *The Day Lincoln Died* and Mr. Lord's *A Night to Remember, Day of Infamy* commemorates and documents an outstanding event of the American

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past. Facts abound here and were it not for the maps on the inside covers of the volume, one would need a close knowledge of Pearl Harbor and of the whole island of Oahu to follow Mr. Lord's narrative. However, the facts are what we need. We already have the meaning. That is why "changed" is such a pale word. At least for one age group—roughly, those of us who were between sixteen and twenty-four years of age in 1941—lives were more than changed by Pearl Harbor, they were defined. There had been war news before December 7th, and the draft, of course, but fundamentally there had been childhood and youth in the Depression. Pearl Harbor marks such a change that it stands in the same relation to many individuals that the War Between the States does to the nation as a whole.

What is the meaning that gives the facts Mr. Lord has presented so much life? First of all, Pearl Harbor was the answer to the question, Why? Why were we at war, why in uniform? Pearl Harbor. It was, also, the clean-cut beginning of an action with a middle and end. Even before it ended everyone was sure that it would end, and that we would win. Whatever the slogan—"The Golden Gate by forty-eight"—the outcome was sure. In this respect World War II was less a hell than the cold war or the inconclusive armistice in Korea or the present conflict of ideologies. The middle of this action took up the best years of our lives, as the American romance of youth has it. What is not generally recognized or admitted is that these years, for many of us, were considerably better for being spent in uniform. Meaning was imposed on us. Youth's wonder was provided with an experience commensurate to itself in intensity and scope. Adventure and duty joined hands. From small towns and great cities, out of families that had known the humiliation and monotony of idleness and poverty the young men marched off—to the wide blue of the skies, over the broad oceans to an exotic Europe and Africa and to unheard-of islands in the Pacific. At last came news of the mushrooms over Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

I know of some who, on seeing their first movie in the service, forgot where they were and got out of their seats when the movie ended thinking they could walk home. Discharge from the armed forces was a little like that. You were not sure for some time that you were really out. Pearl Harbor began a pattern that was hard to do without. Instead of accepting an order imposed upon one, one had now to create an order. You created an order, a way of life, by settling down and being like everyone else. This, meaning a prosperous civilian life, was what the country had been fighting for. So it was said and nobody wanted to argue. But it was not true. Whatever the songs said or the propagandists preached, everyone fought or helped others to fight because we had been attacked at Pearl Harbor.

Mr. Lord makes it abundantly clear that the day of Infamy was also a day of unity. After the shock of surprise, the cooperation was excellent save for some understandably trigger-happy gunners who shot at everything that flew and identified the planes later. *Day of Infamy* is now a best seller for the best of reasons: there's nothing like a good war. "It exceeds peace as far as day does night, it's spritely, waking, audible, and full of vent. Peace is a very apoplexy, lethargy, mulled, deaf, sleepy, insensible . . . " With war outmoded, poetry becomes a requirement of sanity.

A Pleasant Story

OUTBREAK OF LOVE. By Martin Boyd. Reynal. $3.75.

By ELIZABETH BARTELME

ON THE jacket of this novel a well-known British writer describes Mr. Boyd's work as "distinguished and amusing, worldly wise and romantic." A few qualifying adjectives would make the description more accurate. For *Outbreak of Love* is not especially distinguished, only moderately amusing (except in isolated scenes), and wildly romantic. As for worldly wisdom, Mr. Boyd knows the foibles of the social group about which he writes, and there is no doubt that he has a strong sense of irony.

Laid in a pre-World War I Australian setting, the story is concerned with a late-blooming love affair that develops between Diana Von Flugel, the beautiful wife of a self-centered German musician, and Russell Lockwood, an expatriate who has returned from Europe to Melbourne to test the strength of old roots. The possibilities of romantic encounter appeal to Diana, who in middle age is restless and irritated with Wolfie, her childlike husband. Diana's emotions are tenuous and hesitant until the accidental discovery that Wolfie has been keeping a mistress propels her toward Russell and the broader horizons that he temptingly holds before her.

At this point stumbling blocks begin to appear, the principal one being Josie, Diana's daughter, who has fallen in love with a government aide-de-camp, John Wyckham. Diana cannot help but contrast the strong sureness of the young lovers with her own secret and untidy plans, which now have to be put aside until Josie is safely launched into marriage and a new life in England. But even the outbreak of the war, she feels, will not permanently deter her flight with Russell. The ultimate absurdity of her position becomes clear to Diana only when her husband is publicly insulted because of his German blood, and his claim, and that of her children, upon her asserts itself.

Much of the story is told in the first person by Guy Langton, a nephew of Diana's, and the employment of this all-seeing, all-knowing manipulator has its drawbacks. Guy seems to be everywhere at all times and to have an amazing capacity for mind reading. Since no evidence of confidence between nephew and aunt appears to exist, this device is hardly successful. It operates more effectively when Guy is describing the escapades of the other Langtons, a clan of many

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dimensions and charming eccentricities, with whom Guy associates himself constantly, if in a minor role.

All of Mr. Boyd's characters, in fact, are lively and interesting personalities with the one exception of Russell, who is bloodless, remote and seems no more than a convenient figure around whom complications multiply. And since Mr. Boyd is a witty writer, it is unfortunate that his propensity for turning a phrase at times leads him into an epigrammatic orgy. His slight story will hardly extend one's knowledge of the human condition but it is pleasant and entertaining enough for a lazy evening's reading.

Babel Theory

THE STRANGE ISLANDS. By Thomas Merton. New Directions. $3.00.

By JOHN LOGAN

THOMAS Merton's new book of poems is dull, daunted and reminiscent of Eliot. These three qualities can be illustrated from the first poem "How to Enter a Big City," which introduces the central, old cliché of the book—namely that Babylon, The Tower of Babel and the Augustinian City of Man are all figures for the contemporary city.

The dullness of the opening poem shows this: Here,/Have a little of my blood,/Rich people! . . . Wheat in towers. Meat on ice./ Cattle cars. Miles of wide open walls/. . . Miles of it. Still the same city./" And still the same sad song.

There is a good deal of daunted clucking about the state of the race in the city: "Then people come out into the light of afternoon,/ Covered all over with black powder,/ And begin to attack one another. . ./ Young men full of coffee and/ Old women with medicine under their skin/ Are all approaching death. . . ." There's temptation of course, if you can stay alive until evening, "Until the lights come on with a swagger of frauds."

Through the book the Eliotisms are endless and wearying in theme, verse form and idiom. For example, in the first poem: "People hurrying along the wall./ Here you are, bury my dead bones./. . . Those are radios that were his eyes./. . . Do you know where you are going?/ Do you know whom you must meet?" Eliotic images of cataclysmic wind, falling towers, twilight of civilization, the emptied city, etc., continue throughout the enormously long and boring verse drama (one half the entire book) *The Tower of Babel*: "Suddenly the burly dark filled the whole sky. Can you still hear me in this wind?" One longs to be able to answer, no.

The solution to the whole civic anthropological problem, spared us in Eliot, but offered to us by Thomas Merton comes out to be this in *The Tower of Babel*: somehow, with grace, get to the country and be quiet, except at weddings, discarding the machines that man's intelligence and agony have yielded him, tromping on the grapes together, achieving a massive single-mindedness, everybody thinking alike—which is supposed to be peace. The City of God is seen as an outmoded farm, with a vineyard: a kind of quiet, early-Kentucky institution.

Some passages from the drama elaborate this thought: "Men were free because they thought the same thing . . . Because they do not live by the machine, they fear no insecurity [!] . . . Since they live mostly in silence they know . . . life . . . Before the sun was up/ We had already milked the cows,/ Watered the horses, hitched up the . . ./ Everybody's grapes will redden the gutters/ . . . And now we all unite/ To celebrate a wedding . . . We have heard/ The same songs before, at other weddings./ That is why we play them now."

The easy simplification of all this is regrettable in itself (and it goes with a parochialism which is painful: atheism is judged as a comforting illusion on the ground that if God does not exist, then men "do not have to be troubled with the problem of their own existence either.") But more relevantly it means death to poetic art as the quotation about the wedding music implies, as the Babel-theory of art itself implies, and as this book shows, it having nearly all "been played before." The forms of the poems and their diction, except for *Sports Without Blood,* and their rhythms are stock ones or are derived from somebody else's invention, as one of the longest poems in the book, "Elias," follows Eliot's quartet form.

The Tower of Babel says that man's new city shall be built without human wisdom, human inven-

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The Church Today, II

Certain changes are seen to be taking place in these latter days of post-Reformation Catholicism:

"There was certainly a strong tendency to minimize the function of the layman in the Church and to view the Church as a hierarchical structure of which the layman was a kind of appendage. Nowadays all that has changed. The importance which is now attached to the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ, the concept of Catholic Action, the Liturgical Movement, has truly helped to reinstate the laity in its proper position as a definite 'order' within the Church with its own specific function . . . It is the laity which forms the bridge between the Church and the world. The layman belongs integrally and vitally to the Church, but he also belongs to the world. Nowadays we realize, perhaps more than ever in the past, the immense need there is to redeem the world—not merely to redeem people from the world, but to redeem the world itself, to enter into its economic and social and political life and strive to bring the principles of the Gospel to bear on it; to enter into its intellectual life and try to make the influence of a Christian philosophy felt in the universities and in the arts and in the whole pattern of its culture. We live in a world which has become progressively alienated from Christianity and which requires to be redeemed on almost every level of existence. This must be above all the work of the laity and it is for this reason that the lay apostolate has become a matter of such urgency and importance."

—Bede Griffiths
in The Commonweal
November 9, 1956

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tion or human power, and "witho hands, without labor, witho money and without plans." Natur man is seen here as quite incapab of building, except badly. Man an incompetent animal. In the Ba bel-theory of art, I take it the sam thing applies, not just to cities an towers, but to products of huma making generally, such as thes poems: as the work of a man the can only be bad. Then why con tinue to prove that they can be bad'

A Sturdy Oak

HENRY CLAY AND THE ART OF AMERICAN POLITICS. By Clement Eaton. Little, Brown. $3.50.

By JOHN COURNOS

THE PORTENTOUS epoch which Mr. Eaton aptly calls "the golden age of American oratory" was dominated by a distinguished triumvirate—Webster, Clay and Calhoun. Only lately these three outstanding figures have been voted, with LaFollette and Taft, as the greatest Senators in the long history of the upper legislative body. That the great trio should have appeared in one generation is a fact that speaks eloquently for an age which lived amid the oncoming shadows of an internecine war. All three sought the Presidency (Clay five times); in this they all failed.

It would be idle to speculate as to whether these men, had they lived, could have prevented the deadly conflict. A study of the life and character of Henry Clay, ably narrated in this small but comprehensive volume, gives ample assurance that he for one would have done his best to restrain those of the South who panted for a fight. A man with whom reasonableness was a passion, he stooped to expediency only when peace was at stake. He was a compromiser, a master of conciliation, and with good reason he won the title of the "Great Pacificator." In nothing had he shown this temper more impressively than in his attitude to slavery. A confirmed humanitarian,

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he never faltered in his long-continued advocacy of the gradual emancipation of the slaves. To be sure Clay himself maintained some slaves on his Kentucky estate, and, though he was both a kind and understanding master, this was held against him by abolitionists.

Clay advocated an annual appropriation by Congress of ten million dollars for the emancipation of slaves, but he was advised that such a proposal would not be well received in the South. "Since Clay usually acted on the pragmatic principle of attempting only the possible he made no public move to carry out his noble project." He was pragmatic in all things, as became a man who had risen from poverty to affluence and who was ruled by experience and common sense. Despite his reasonableness he was audacious, a man of force who acted with promptitude and decision when action was called for.

Apart from pragmatism, moderation was one of his salient characteristics. While advising his sons "not to gamble, and not to drink heavily"—he himself seems to have been a wine drinker rather than an imbiber of Kentucky bourbon—his idea of personal liberty led him to oppose legislation prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors. To Harrison Gray Otis of Boston he wrote in 1839: "The Temperance cause has done great good and will continue to do so, as long as moral means are employed. But if it resorts to legislation—to coercion—it will be resisted. No man likes to have, or ought to have, cold water or brandy, separately or in combination, put in or kept out of his throat upon any other will than his own."

Clay's life was not free from personal tragedy. Theodore, his oldest son, spent years in a lunatic asylum. Thomas Hart, his second son, after a period of dissipation, married but failed in business. Henry, the best of his sons, tried to pattern himself after his father, but arrived at this conclusion: "How difficult it is for a young tree to grow in the shade of an aged oak."

Mr. Eaton has given us a fine rounded study of the oak.

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John F. Sullivan, a member of the English Department of Notre Dame University, is a frequent reviewer.

Thomas F. Curley is a New York novelist and critic.

Elizabeth Bartelme, a regular reviewer, is an editor for a New York book publishing house.

John Logan is on the faculty of Notre Dame University. His last volume of verse was *A Cycle for Mother Cabrini*.

John Cournos is a well-known critic and anthologist of Americana.

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